



Dear Legislator,

In a recent interview with the Capitol Hill newspaper *The Hill*, the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission singled out state and local regulations as one of the largest barriers to broadband Internet expansion. The statement echoed a presidential executive order last month ordering a government-wide review of regulations that may be out of date and stifling job growth and economic development. In Michigan, Governor Snyder has also identified the need to review and update laws and regulations that stifle economic growth and investment.

As you know, there is no question that some regulations in Michigan – and particularly our state’s outdated telecom laws – are hindering the development of new infrastructure and expansion of technologies like broadband. Especially in the current economy, broadband expansion is crucial, not only because of the importance of high-speed Internet access, but because of the economic impact of infrastructure development as well.

Midwest Consumers for Choice and Competition (MCCC) is a non-profit organization of individual consumers interested in technology, broadband, and telecommunication issues with state projects throughout the Midwest region. The project works to support an environment for innovative technology, high-tech job creation, and economic growth.

We are writing because Michigan – which last updated its telecom rules in 2005 – still requires companies to invest in old copper-line technologies that consumers no longer desire. Those requirements are preventing companies from investing in infrastructure for newer technologies like broadband and wireless. In 2005, Michigan’s law set a positive trend. Today, Michigan’s law is being passed by.

A quick look around the Midwest demonstrates what we are talking about and asking Michigan lawmakers to consider. A recent study commissioned by Wired Wisconsin showed that Ohio has seen more than \$540 million of announced investment and 20,000 new jobs since it passed telecom modernization legislation in June 2010. Illinois has seen 8,400 new jobs and \$520 million in investment since it passed its version of modernized telecom rules in May 2010.

While other states have removed a major barrier to broadband expansion, Michigan continues to maintain certain outdated rules that are hampering economic growth, preventing some consumers from enjoying all the benefits broadband has to offer and setting the state behind its neighbors.

Modernizing Michigan’s telecom law and removing these barriers must be a priority for the State Legislature during this legislative session, and we ask for your support in that effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thad Nation', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Thad Nation, Executive Director
Midwest Consumers for Choice and Competition

Midwest Consumers for Choice and Competition is a non-profit organization of individual consumers interested in technology, broadband, and telecommunication issues with state projects throughout the Midwest region. For more information, visit www.mc4cc.org.